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ISRAELI STRIKES RESUME IN GAZA AFTER TRUCE WITH HAMAS ENDS

Israel Defense Forces resumed its full-fledged war against Hamas on Friday, minutes after a weeklong truce with the militant outfit expired

EFFORTS TO PROLONG PAUSE IN FIGHTING FAIL

Combat between Israel and the Gaza-based terror group resumed in the morning after efforts to reach an agreement on prolonging the seven-day pause in fighting could not be reached. Under the terms of the temporary truce, Hamas had returned around 100 Israeli hostages in exchange for the release of more than 200 Palestinians held in Israeli jails on various charges

IDF HITS OVER 200 TARGETS IN GAZA STRIP

- The Israeli military said it hit over 200 targets in Gaza after resuming strikes
- Hamas said it had offered to hand over the bodies of Shiri Bibas and her two sons, including a 10 months old, to extend truce but Israel didn't respond
- According to Israeli government spokesman Eylon Levy, Hamas is still holding 137 hostages taken on October 7 from Israel, including the Bibas family | P12

15,000

NUMBER OF PEOPLE KILLED IN AIR STRIKES, ACCORDING TO HAMAS-RUN GOVT IN GAZA

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Bomb squad personnel and police scan a school following the bomb threat email in Bengaluru on Friday. (Right) A chaotic scene outside a school in Bengaluru on Friday | SHASHIDHARA GYRAPPA

Bomb threat: Chaos in B'luru schools

Turns out to be hoax; 68 institutions receive email sent using VPN; students sent home

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

SIXTY-EIGHT schools in Bengaluru Urban and Bengaluru Rural districts received bomb threat emails on Friday morning after which students were sent home. Chaos prevailed outside the schools as parents rushed to pick up their children. Forty-eight schools in Bengaluru city received the bomb threat while 20 institutions in Bengaluru Rural district received similar emails.

The threat was declared hoax after a thorough search at all schools which received such emails. They were sent by a user who used a 'beeble' email which doesn't show or record his data. The server of the email and its headquarters are said to be in Cyprus, police said.

The email stated, "There are explosive devices on the school grounds. "Convert to Islam or die under the weight of the sword of Islam." It was sent by user name 'Kharijites' at 6.03 am on Friday. "The emails have been sent using VPN to 48 schools in the city. The accused can send such emails sitting anywhere," city police commissioner B Dayananda said.

While searches were on, he took to platform X and stated that some schools in the city received emails on Friday indicating a "bomb threat". "Anti-sabotage and bomb detection squads were pressed into service. The emails were found to be hoax. All efforts will be made to trace the culprits."

"Around 20 schools in Bengaluru Rural police limits have received threat emails. FIRs have been registered in jurisdictional police stations," Mallikarjun Baladandi, SP (Bengaluru Rural), told *TNIE*.

Schools in Yelahanka, Basaveshwaranagar, Sadashivanagar, Malleswaram, Bannerghatta, Hebbagodi, Sarjapura and Jigani received threat emails. At least 30 schools received threat emails last year. The police, however, couldn't make any progress in the investigation. P3

CM DIRECTS POLICE TO CONDUCT DETAILED PROBE

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that he has asked police to seriously investigate the e-mail and its source, and provide adequate security to schools and temples as a precautionary measure. Meanwhile, DyCM DK Shivakumar said, "Prima facie, it appears to be fake (hoax). I spoke to the police...but we should be cautious. Police are looking into it."

THE CONTENT OF THE EMAIL...

Under the username, 'Kharijites,' the email to 68 schools threatened that explosive devices had been planted on their premises. It also threatened to kill people, including children, if they didn't accept the group's true religion.

> **Anti-sabotage and bomb detection squads were pressed into service. The emails were found to be hoax. All efforts will be made to trace the culprits**
>
> Dayananda, police commissioner

Modi offers to host COP33 in '28

S V KRISHNA CHAITANYA @ Dubai

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday became the early bird by proposing to host the COP33 in India. The global climate summit comes to Asia by rotation in 2028 and he made the early pitch.

Modi made his presence felt at the COP28 here as he was the only head of the state on the panel at the high-level segment of World Climate Action Summit. "India is committed to working towards the UN Framework for Climate Change process. That is why, through this platform, I propose to host the COP33 summit in India in 2028," he said.

Despite being home to 17% of the world's population, "our contribution to global carbon emissions is less than 4%. India is one of the few economies that are on track to fulfil NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions) targets. We achieved emission intensity targets 11 years ago. We have attained the non-fossil fuel targets nine years ahead of schedule. Our goal is to reduce emissions intensity by 45% by 2030 and increase the share of non-fossil fuels to 50%. We will keep progressing towards the goal of net zero by 2070," he said.

Aarti Khosla, director, Climate Trends, said: "The podium that was offered to the PM is testimony to India's changing geopolitical clout. The offer to host the COP33 is a diplomatic masterstroke."

Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy, Climate Action Network International, said India's progress in renewable energy serves as a powerful example for the world.

Modi also announced a green credit scheme, for which the Union environment ministry had issued a notification recently. Explaining how the scheme works, Modi said an inventory of degraded wasteland will be made. Individuals or organisations will take up plantation and the green credits will be issued in their name. These credits can be used for future expansion and are tradable. The best part is they will be in digital form. This was just an example, he said.

Vaibhav Chaturvedi, Fellow, Council on Energy, Environment and Water, said, "If green credits are traded across borders, it could lead to phenomenal global action to enhance carbon sinks as well as achieve other SDGs."

Meanwhile, the UAE said it had earmarked immediate capital investment for the development of over 6 GW of new clean energy capacity in India. This includes the construction of 1,200 MW of wind and solar projects that will begin producing clean power by 2025.

Besides, the Loss and Damage Fund went up from $420 mn on Day 1 to $573.70 mn.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber and Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni at the UN climate summit in Dubai on Friday | AP

GST mop-up grows 15% to ₹1.68 lakh cr in November

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

AGGRESSIVE tax collection, festive season buying, and increased domestic activity pushed up the Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue by 15% to ₹1.68 lakh crore in November, government data showed. It is the highest growth rate for any month so far in FY24.

GST revenue in the same month a year ago was ₹1.45 lakh crore. While this is 2% lower than the October collection of ₹1.72 lakh crore, it is the ninth straight month that the monthly collections have exceeded ₹1.5 lakh crore and the sixth time in FY24 it is crossing the ₹1.60 lakh crore mark.

According to the breakup of the November data, central GST was ₹30,420 crore, state GST ₹38,226 crore, integrated GST ₹87,009 crore, and compensation cess was ₹12,274 crore.

The cumulative gross GST collected in the first eight months of the fiscal year is ₹13.32 lakh crore, an 11.9% increase from the previous year.

Explaining the robust numbers, Vivek Jalan, partner, Tax Connect Advisory Services, said the deadline for issuing notices for 2017-18 and 2018-19 has passed, leading to increased activity and revenue in GST departments. According to him, state GST departments are competing with each other to generate higher revenues, and the central GST department is also working aggressively. "For example, Telangana would always try to compete with West Bengal and hold that even though its consumers are much less than West Bengal, its GST collection is higher. The central GST department has also been aggressive on the revenue front," said Jalan.

Pratik Jain, partner, PwC India, attributes the growth to festive season activity and tighter audits. "Robust growth in GST is seen in most of the manufacturing states, which is indicative of uplift in demand and consumption," he said.

Warmer winter, fewer cold wave days this season

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

THE India Meteorological Department on Friday predicted that this winter will be warmer and is likely to have fewer cold wave days.

It means the occurrence of cold waves over the north, northwest, central, east and northeast is likely to be below normal between December 2023 and February 2024. Besides, the monthly rainfall is likely to be normal.

Significantly November became the warmest month since 1901 as the post-monsoon rainfall deficit was around 19% across India.

This newspaper had written in early November that winter will be warmer due to stronger El Nino conditions — a climatic phenomenon due to the warming of the Pacific Ocean, leading to weaker monsoon in India.

In its Seasonal Outlook for the temperatures during winter, the IMD reiterated that moderate to strong El Niño conditions and above average sea surface temperatures are prevailing in most parts of the equatorial Pacific Ocean, which are likely to continue during winter.

The All India mean temperature recorded its highest value since 1901 in August, September and November this year. The second highest was in February.

The weather office predicted above normal rainfall over most parts of the northwest, adjoining areas of central and east India and some areas of extreme south peninsular India.

The December rainfall in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal, coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, Rayalaseema, Kerala and Mahe, and south interior Karnataka is most likely to be normal, that is 69-131% of the long period average.

Muslim man beaten up, forced to chant 'Jai Sri Ram'

AMIT S UPADHYE @ Hubballi

A 65-year-old Muslim man was allegedly beaten up by two unidentified persons and forced to chant Jai Sri Ram at Gangavati in Koppal district on November 25.

An FIR was registered based on a complaint by Hussain Saab, the victim, on Thursday. According to the FIR, Hussain, who begs in front of mosques for a living, returned to Gangavati from Hosapete in the evening. He was waiting for an autorickshaw when two men riding a motorcycle approached him and forced him to go with them.

"The duo took me to Pampanagar and started abusing me. They pushed me down from the bike though I pleaded let me go home. They assaulted me and forced to chant Jai Sri Ram," Hussain said.

"They broke a beer bottle and tried to cut my beard with a piece of glass. When they did not succeed, one of them lit matchsticks and burnt my beard. I thought I would be killed. They kept beating me until a few sheherds woke up and came to my rescue," Hussain said. P4

SDPI members with Hussain Saab at his Gangavati residence

EXPRESS READ

Counting of votes on Monday in Mizoram

New Delhi: The counting of votes in Mizoram will be on December 4 instead of December 3, Election Commission said on Friday. The move comes after many forums requested for a change on the ground that Sunday is significant for the people of Christian-dominated Mizoram | P10

Meet Stalin, resolve impasse: SC to Guv

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Friday asked Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi to convene a meeting with TN CM MK Stalin and discuss and try to resolve the issue over the non-grant of assent to Bills passed by the Assembly. "We would like the Governor to resolve the impasse," the court said | P5

India beat Australia by 20 runs, win series 3-1

Raipur: India beat Australia by 20 runs sealing the series 3-1 here on Friday. Put into bat, Rinku Singh (46 off 29 balls) and Jitesh Sharma (35 off 19 balls) provided late fireworks to take India to 174/9. In reply, Australia scored 154/ 7 in 20 overs. The last match will be played in Bengaluru | P15

Bhatkal Tanzeem issues fatwa against illegal beef sale

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS
@ Karwar

THE Bhatkal Tanzeem has banned illegal transportation and sale of beef in the town by issuing a "fatwa".

This "fatwa" comes three years after the ban on cow slaughter by the Tanzeem.

It is aimed at ending the controversy over illegal cattle transportation and illegal sale of beef.

"We issued the fatwa earlier this week. We have asked people of Bhatkal not to buy beef that is transported and sold illegally," Inayathullah Shabandar, Tanzeem president, told *The New Indian Express*.

He said, "There is no place for such illegal acts in Islam." There have been instances where cattle have been lifted from the streets and sold. "We have no objections if cattle are purchased from markets and transported. There are cattle markets in Haveri, Udupi and other places in the State. Cattle can be purchased from these markets," he added.

Inayathullah said, "We have even asked the police to take strict action against people illegally transporting cattle and selling beef."

The police have registered 179 cases of illegal beef transportation from 2020 to November 2023.

6 cops suspended for assaulting lawyer

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chikkamagaluru

A police sub-inspector, an assistant sub-inspector, a head constable and three constables attached to the town police station here were suspended on Friday for allegedly assaulting an advocate for riding a motorcycle without a helmet on Thursday.

A constable in plain clothes stopped advocate **Preetam** for riding his motorcycle without a helmet around 8 pm on Market Road in front of the police station. The constable snatched the motorcycle keys though Preetam stated that he will pay fine for helmetless riding. An argument broke out between them and other cops rushed to the spot and took Preetam to the station and allegedly assaulted him with lathis and hockey sticks, according to local Bar council president HM Sudhakar.

Preetam sustained injuries on his chest and back and is being treated at a private hospital here. P5

FIRST INDIAN ON THE MOON BY 2040: ISRO

PURAN CHOUDHARY
@ Bengaluru

VICTOR Joseph, associate scientific secretary, Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro), said on Friday that vehicle tests and uncrewed missions with the launch vehicle for Gaganyaan 2025 are on and will be completed by next year.

The mission aims to send human crew to an orbit of 400km and bring them back safely to the Earth, he said.

Joseph said India has plans to have a man on the Moon by 2040, which will be a stepping stone in Indian space history. This will also see a huge investment from private companies in the space sector.

Reiterating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement, Joseph said the country has set ambitious goals to establish its own space station, 'Bhartiya Antariksha Station', by 2035.

Work is on to achieve these goals, he added.

Joseph was speaking at Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS-2023) on the topic, "From the Moon to the Sun - The Dawn of the Indian Story", along with Sreeram Ananthasayanam, partner, Deloitte, Dr Vinod Kumar, director, promotion, IN-SPACe, Vinod Chippalkatti, president, Centum, and N Sudheer Kumar, director, Isro.

Joseph also spoke about the "growing India's share in global space economy from 2% in 2023 to 15% by 2047 ($1,500 billion)." He introduced the decadal target for the sector and aims for the industry to progress by 8% by 2023.

Ananthasayanam highlighted the needs of the industry and said 'The Space Act' will affirm policy regulations and incentives which will give a clear picture and roles for different entities, including clarity on the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy.

CONTINUED ON: P9